

• • R E M A R K S • •

The Official Action of February 26, 2003 has been thoroughly studied. Accordingly, the changes presented herein for the application, considered together with the following remarks, are believed to be sufficient to place the application into condition for allowance.

By the present amendment, independent claim 1 has been changed to recite that the assembly sheets are bonded to each other exclusively along edges of the sheets using a continuous bonding line that extends along edges of the sheets.

Support for this change to claim 1 can be found throughout applicants' disclosure and particularly in original claim 1 where it was recited that the sheets were bonded to each other along a continuous bonding line extending along edges of the sheets.

Entry of the changes to claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-17 are pending in this application.

Claims 16 and 17 are presently allowed.

Claims 5-15 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner has indicated that claims 5-15 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,504,977 to King et al.

For the reasons set forth below, it is submitted that all of the pending claims are allowable over the prior art or record and therefore, the outstanding rejection of claims 1-4 should properly be withdrawn.

Favorable reconsideration by the Examiner is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner has relied upon King et al. as disclosing:

...a surgical gown (10) with a main body (14-16) having a front (14), back portion (15, 16) as seen in figure 1 and a plurality of sheets, the main gown layer (25) and the patch (20) with adhesive strips (28), which are straight and linear and which bond the sheets together along in continuous bonding line extending along edges of the sheets as seen in figure 2.

Applicants' independent claim 1 recites that the main body comprises a plurality of assembly sheets having air permeability and liquid non-permeability, and that the assembly sheets are bonded to each other exclusively along edges of the sheets using a continuous bonding line that extends along edges of the sheets.

The Examiner has relied upon the main gown layer (25) and the patch (20) of King et al. as reading on applicants' "plurality of assembly sheets."

In King et al. patch (20) is "adhered to either the inside or outside of the base gown material" "by a series of vertical adhesive strips 28 spaced about 2.5 cm apart."

As seen in Fig. 2, the adhesive strips 28 extend across the entire area of patch 20.

Applicants' independent claim 1 excludes such an adhesive pattern and requires that the assembly sheets are bonded to each other exclusively along edges of the sheets using a continuous bonding line that extends along edges of the sheets.

Accordingly, applicants' invention is not anticipated by King et al.

It is important to note the reasons as to why King et al. teaches the particular pattern of vertical adhesive strips that extend across the entire surface of patch 20.

It column 5, lines 5-17 King et al. teach:

This intermittent adhesive pattern provides enhanced flexibility, thus reducing stiffness of the base gown material-film patch laminate as compared to an overall adhesive pattern covering the entire patch area. By attaching patch 20 with only

vertical strips 28 of adhesive, vertical air passageways between the film and the base gown material are provided to aid in cooling the part of the gown wearer covered by patch 20. Also, vertical adhesive strips 28 can be readily applied by mechanical means to either the base gown material in central operation region 25 or film patch 20 during the gown manufacturing operations.

Applicants' invention is concerned with providing a barrier at the seams of the assembly sheets of a disposable surgical gown that effectively prevents exudation of substances such as blood through the seams, while providing bonding patterns which resist breaking or exfoliation when the wearer of the disposable gowns moves intensively. (See paragraph bridging pages 22 and 23 of applicants' specification).

It is accordingly submitted that applicants' invention distinguishes over King et al. both structurally and functionally.

It is noted that at column 3, lines 61-54 King et al. teaches that:

The various seams of gown 10 may be sewn, or accomplished through the use of appropriate adhesive means, or by heat sealing if at least some of the parts are made of heat-sealable material.

This portion of King et al. indicates that King et al. fails to recognize any distinction between the use of sewn seams, adhesive means or heat sealing, and otherwise fails to teach a continuous bonding line extending along only the edges of the sheets.

Based upon the above distinctions between King et al. and the present invention, and the overall teachings of King et al., properly considered as a whole, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner cannot rely upon King et al. as required under 35 U.S.C. §102 as anticipating applicants' claimed invention.

It is, therefore, submitted that any reliance upon King et al. would be improper inasmuch as King et al. does not remotely anticipate, teach, suggest or render obvious the present invention.

It is submitted that the claims, as now amended, and the discussion contained herein clearly show that the claimed invention is novel and neither anticipated nor obvious over the teachings of King et al. and the outstanding rejection of the claims should hence be withdrawn.

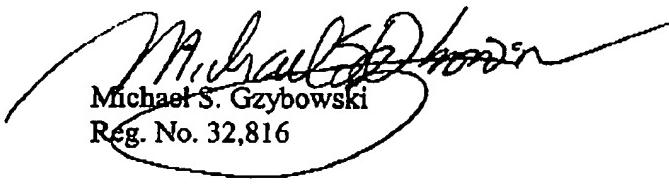
Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejection of the claims and an early allowance of the claims is believed to be in order.

It is believed that the above represents a complete response to the Official Action and reconsideration is requested.

If upon consideration of the above, the Examiner should feel that there remains outstanding issues in the present application that could be resolved, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' patent counsel at the telephone number given below to discuss such issues.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR §1.136 is hereby made. Please charge the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 12-2136 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,



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Marked-Up Copy of the Claims
As Amended on June 24, 2003

1. (Amended) A disposable surgical gown, comprising:
a main body including a front body and a back body; and
sleeves extending from both sides of upper end of the main body, wherein
the main body comprises a plurality of assembly sheets having air permeability and liquid
non-permeability, the assembly sheets being bonded to each other exclusively along [a continuous
bonding line extending along] edges of the [sheets.] sheets using a continuous bonding line that
extends along edges of the sheets.